



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE  
(219.006-US)

In re Application of: **Ushiki et al.**

Serial No: **10/083,440**

Filing Date: **February 26, 2002**

Title: **Surface Contamination Analyzer for Semiconductor  
Wafer, Method Used Therein and Process for  
Fabrication**

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) Art Unit: **2818**  
)  
) Examiner: **Hoang**  
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Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

Dear Sir:

Applicants note the Examiner's comments regarding allowable subject matter. While Applicants agree with the Examiner's ultimate conclusion that the inventions, as claimed, are patentable, it is the combination of features that render the (independent and dependent) claims patentable.

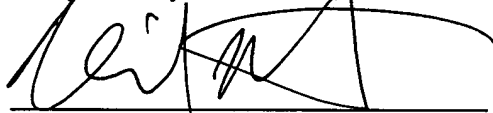
It is not clear what is meant by the Examiner's comment "especially when these limitations are considered within the specific combination claims, to teach comparing the amount of current flowing out from the target region with the amount of reference current flowing out from a region of a reference wafer." This notwithstanding, allowed claim 16 recites a process for fabricating a semiconductor device including, among other things, treating a semiconductor wafer in an atmosphere potentially having an origin of contamination, investigating a degree of contamination on the semiconductor wafer, and

evaluating the degree of contamination. It is the features of the allowed claim, in combination, that render claim 16 patentable.

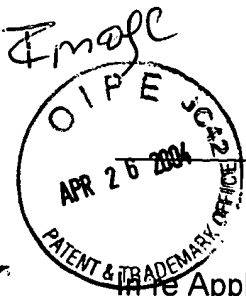
Finally, no inference or conclusion should be drawn that Applicants believe that the Examiner's reasons for allowance are the only reasons the claims are patentable. Indeed, the Examiner's statements focus on the independent claim and no mention is made with respect to the dependent claims, which include other inventive aspects. Applicants interpret the Examiner's comments to be not exhaustive. That is, the Examiner's comments are directed solely to certain patentable features in the independent claim and are in no way exhaustive relative to the independent claim or the dependent claims.

Date: April 22, 2004

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Steinberg', written over a horizontal line.

Neil Steinberg  
Reg. No. 34,735  
650-968-8079



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**Certificate of Mailing under 37 CFR 1.8**

I hereby certify that the attached Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance (2 pages) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:

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on April 22, 2004.

  
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